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TESTIMONY

To the Committee on Government Administration and Elections,
Connecticut State Legislature

Attn. Cynthia Dunne

RE: *HB 6672, Sections 10 and 6 (An Act regarding the Conveyance of Certain Parcels of Land)*

March 27, 2013

I am writing in support of both Section 10 and Section 6 of HB6672. I write as a private individual, a consulting wetland ecologist. I am also an active member of both the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group and a board member of the Connecticut Botanical Society, but I do not represent these organizations.

I strongly support Section 10, which permanently repeals land swap provision last year's Land Conveyance Bill. I note that the Connecticut Botanical Society did inventory the plants at the site and found signature uncommon species of sand barren habitats such as goat's rue (*Tephrosia*). In Connecticut, sandy habitats are more special and less common than the forested habitat at the swap site, with loamy till soil. The site is in indeed need of invasive control, but fortunately Connecticut has a great track record of effective invasive control with volunteer work parties, where government funds are inadequate. After the autumn olive is removed, the site will have excellent potential for restoration, with introduction of suitable native species from other sandy sites along the river. Aside from the intrinsic value of the land and the correctly appraised high monetary value of riverfront land, the swap transaction was inherently very harmful as a precedent to our state's fine tradition of below market sales for open space. This repeal can help undo that harm.

I also support Section 6, as this very large, important tract of forestland warrants additional protection via conservation easement.

Respectfully submitted,

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